

From a novel or play of literary merit, select an important character who is a villain. Then, in a well-organized essay, analyze the nature of the character's villainy and show how it enhances meaning in the work. theme

Do not merely summarize the plot. You may choose a work from the list below, or you may choose another work of comparable quality.

Victor

reckless disregard for consequences

selfishness

ego-centric

glory hungry

lack of empathy / compassion

Creature

murderous machinations

who is the true monster?  
what makes a monster?

motifs (topic) - monstrous qualities  
lack of compassion

theme - A life without compassion can wield more  
destruction than those who act with deliberation  
devastation?

thesis: Shelley, through the villainous Victor, reveals  
the devastation wrought from a life squandered in  
selfish and compassionate choices.

irony of name

narrative  
voice

\*foil

juxtaposition

foreshadowing

allusion

Intro strategy: Parallel Character (Jekyll: Hyde)

Jekyll

- sought to discover  
how to separate  
good & evil

- lost control of his  
creation / discovery

- regret

Hyde (creature)

manifestation of  
evil that  
grew stronger  
the more it  
was nourished  
w/ attention

Victor

sought to discover source of life

In The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Robert Louis Stevenson explores the duality of man. Dr. Jekyll distills the evil nature of himself in Mr. Hyde, a character <sup>whose evil</sup> who grows and eventually overtakes the good.

Dr. Henry(?) Jekyll sought to discover the dual nature of man, a pursuit lacking forethought of ~~the~~ its impact on others. Similar to Jekyll, <sup>the character of</sup> Victor Frankenstein pursues a type of knowledge that carries with it destruction easily avoided with proper caution and consideration of the possible consequences. Mary Shelley, through her villainous creation Victor, reveals the devastation wrought from a life squandered in selfish and compassionless choices.

★ universality  
- God (classical allusion)

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus*, was written before 1900. Write an essay in which you present arguments for and against the work's relevance for a person in 2011. Your own position should emerge in the course of your essay. You may refer to works of literature written after 1900 for the purpose of contrast or comparison.

relevance of literature - timelessness of themes - universality

motifs (topics) - personal ambition/glory

(pursuit of knowledge

→ playing God (Prometheus)

cloning/genetic engineering

theme - The pursuit of knowledge for knowledge's sake (often)?  
leads down a path of moral ambiguity, ultimately  
ending in calamity.

thesis - Shelley's Prometheus, Victor Frankenstein, still  
~~stands~~ remains emblematic of those who  
pursue knowledge without regard for  
the moral implications of their actions  
and the probable calamitous outcomes.

contemp. lit/

issues

non-canon

Turanic Park

MSK

Robin Cook

Intro Strategy: extended metaphor

path/travel

journey

route

quest

terrain

- mountains, valleys, vales,  
glens

obstacles

(weather: snow, rain, sleet)  
hail, lightning

Prometheus' punishment

~~Each word a brick, each sentence a path, each paragraph a signpost. Literature takes its reader on a journey unique to the one holding the book.~~

Each word a brick, each sentence a signpost, each novel a path ~~to literature~~ toward a timeless and universal truth. Literature, regardless of when written or set, carries with it observations and axioms relevant to the beholder, <sup>a relevance</sup> based on the individual's personal and unique ~~examples~~ <sup>experience</sup>. In the novel Frankenstein, Mary Shelley's Prometheus, ~~the protagonist~~ <sup>the protagonist</sup> primary speaker Victor, remains emblematic ~~of the~~ <sup>of the</sup> slippery moral slope the unchecked ego travels in its pursuit of knowledge.

Choose a complex and important character in a novel or play of recognized literary merit who might - on the basis of the character's actions alone - be considered evil or immoral. In a well-organized essay, explain both how and why the full presentation of the character in the work makes us react more sympathetically than we otherwise might. Avoid plot summary.

creature — plot: deaths of William, Clerval, Elizabeth  
collateral damage — Justine, Alphonse  
(Victor?)

full presentation — ~~frame~~ framework (1<sup>st</sup> person narrative)  
— juxtaposition of novel: DeLacey fam  
— juxtaposition of literature from which  
he learned  
— imagery of first images (moon, fire)  
— foil  
— comparison to Paradise Lost  
(Adam w/o Eve)  
— nameless

psychological  
motif (topic): empathy

ambivalence of human nature  
ambiguity? human motivation  
context of behaviors

theme: A person's choices for actions are rarely without an underlying explanation and understandable explanation.

thesis: Shelley evokes sympathy for the creature despite his seemingly evil deeds through his exploration of the complexity of the human psyche and its interaction with the surrounding world.

Intro Strategy: Paradox

Slighted by one, kill many.

Slighted by one, kill many: so the logic goes for those suffering feeling outcasted and persecuted by society. On its surface, this argument (?) reads illogically, yet when the apparent plight is examined in context of the macrocosm, on

Slighted by one, kill many: so the logic goes for those feeling outcasted and persecuted by society. Seemingly illogical, this a kernel of truth emerges when this argument is explored through the world of literature. In her novel, Frankenstein, Mary Shelley evokes sympathy for one employing such logic, the creature, through her exploration of the complexity of the human psyche and its interaction with the surrounding world.